

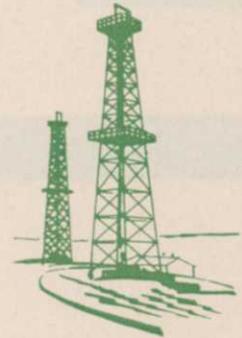


Home office of dick evans inc. is this modern building in Pampa, Texas (above). Evans had it built to his own specs for about \$45,000. Pictured below are one of the firm's branch offices and some of the vehicles used for industrial weed control.



a Weeds and Turf portrait

dick evans, inc. Contract Applicator



Texas company supplies weed control for vast southwestern oil fields

A capital company, in lower case type, is one way to describe the Texas-based operations of dick evans inc. (which doesn't use capital letters), an industrial weed control firm that now has branched out into three states, and is considered to be a pioneer in the contract application of industrial herbicides.

Dick Evans himself first started out in the pest control business. Soon, however, he realized the Southwest's heavy oil industry needed a responsible vegetation maintenance service. He was convinced that here was a real opportunity to perform a service, make a profit, and grow with one of America's rapidly growing industries: petroleum.

Shortly after entering industrial weed control, he disposed of his pest control operations, and set up a closely held corporation.

"At one point during the peak of our promotional activities," Dick recalls, "We employed more than 50 people. Obviously, sales costs became prohibitive, and we found ourselves running out of

operating capital; cash demands were exceeding cash flow."

The company tried all the usual incentive programs, both to boost sales and production. Nothing succeeded to the satisfaction of management.

"Furthermore," Evans says, "some key employees were leaving to form their own organizations in competition with us, which we had not had the foresight to prevent."

After various methods of reorganization were tried unsuccessfully, the Texas operator decided to sell or give away a "working interest" in each territory to his proven key personnel. The operation was broken up into independent segments, with men stationed in heaviest areas of work. Today each segment operates as an independent business under the blanket of the corporation.

"Our home office in Pampa, Texas, is a service headquarters for the people in charge of the branches," Evans points out. "We handle overall large contractual

negotiations on behalf of each, or all, of them. All invoicing and banking is handled in our central office, as is insurance. Of course, this is not new, but to pinpoint responsibility for performance and create initiative for proper field decisions, and still receive a return on our investment, we had no other reasonable alternative."

Today Evans says he sees an ideal business as a one- or a two-man operation with an annual volume of between \$40,000 and \$50,000 a year. Beyond this, he believes, requirements for additional equipment and personnel enter the picture and destroy the profit. Of course, other operators have set themselves up on a different basis with different goals, but Dick Evans has found what he believes is the best procedure for his type of business.

To further simplify overhead and operating complexities, all services such as bookkeeping, advertising, public relations, printing, and similar needs, are farmed out on contract wherever this is possible.

"At one time we employed 10 people in our central office—to day, outside of myself and Mrs. Evans, we have one girl who serves as a secretary and does all invoicing and filing for the entire operation. I handle matters of corporate policy, financing, sales, and field production; Mrs. Evans handles accounts payable and receivable, banking, and acts as liaison with our accounting firm.

"Outside stenographic help is employed when necessary at seasonal peaks," Evans reveals.

The firm's Board of Directors is composed of Dick Evans, Mrs. Evans, the company attorney, the president of the firm's bank, and two outsiders.

"We draw on every conceivable type of advisory service," Dick comments.

Evans is qualified both to perform industrial weed control and to manage a complex corporation. He holds membership in the American Society of Chemical Engineers, American Management Association, Weed Society of America, and various pest control associations, many of which he has served as an officer. He is also a Rotarian, a director of his local chamber of commerce, and a member of many civic and social groups.

Company offices are now located in Great Bend and Wichita, Kansas; Oklahoma City and Enid, Oklahoma; and Perryton, Big Springs, Borger, and Pampa, Texas. In the next five years, the company expects to open some five or six additional operational offices.

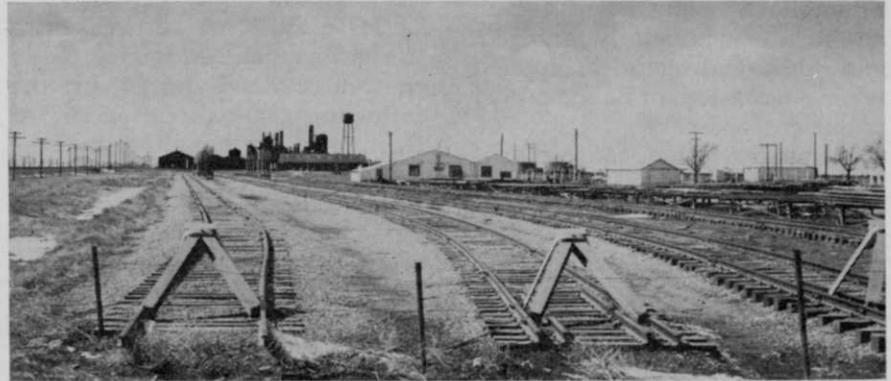
Chose Oil Fields as His Specialty

Dick Evans decided from the start that he would specialize in service to the petroleum industry, so he began to think like an oil man. "We surveyed the requirements of the petroleum industry, including refining, petrochemical plants, oil- and gas-producing properties, and plants processing or manufacturing by-products of petroleum."

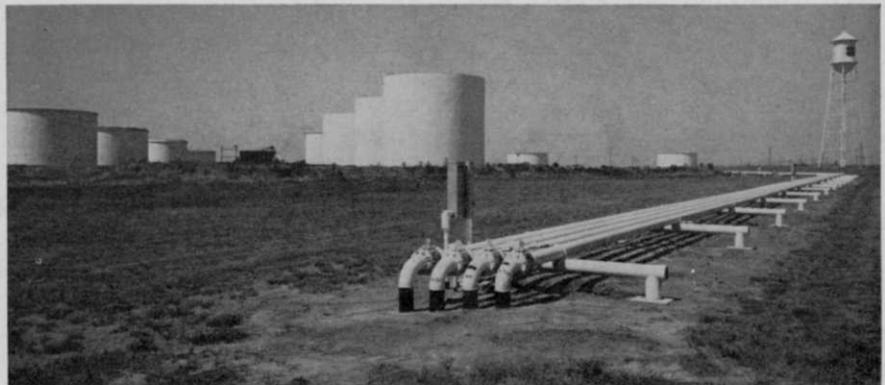
While there are unlimited opportunities in other fields of industrial weed control, it was decided that the techniques learned for the oil fields, and the equip-



When contract applicator Evans (extreme right) decided to build his own building, he carefully studied what his particular needs would be. Here he reviews blueprints with Mrs. M. J. Evans and builders E. E. Shelhammer (extreme left) and Ed Myatt (next to Mrs. Evans). The Texas operator had to make sure his structure would accommodate spray rigs like the one shown below, which is completely outfitted for oil-field weed control jobs. Note the large-capacity, high-pressure sprayer.



Typical installations dick evans, inc. is responsible for include the trackage and butane-loading racks shown above. This facility belongs to Cities Service. Below is one of the many oil tank farms the Evans company keeps weed free. The area below was originally infested with bindweed and wiregrass, but is now virtually free of undesirable growths, thanks to Evans' efforts. These pipelines need to be easily accessible to maintenance crews.



ment specially designed to service these areas, would not be economically adaptable to other pursuits.

"So our employees and our field people are trained to think in oil industry terms," Evans says.

While Evans considers himself one of the first to specialize in service for a single industry, he admits that today there are no less than 200 contract applicators who service the petroleum industry alone.

His Business Philosophy

"It is difficult to put into a few brief words the service we perform," the pioneer applicator muses, "but fundamentally we solicit business from a client on a 'turn-key' basis. This means we will assume complete responsibility for a stated period of time, three to five years preferably, for keeping certain areas *completely weed free*. Embodied in our guarantee is a 'money-back' clause, with two reinspections of the areas to be made during each growing season, at which time any growth that might have been missed during application is manually removed, and additional chemical applied where necessary, at no extra cost to our customer."

Evans feels that contract applicators must remember that they are selling a service, and that whatever they must do to satisfy the customer with this service, must be done.

"We cannot tell our customer that lack of rain, too much rain, illness, improper scheduling, or chemical failures are the reasons for lack of results," he says spiritedly. "The customer just isn't interested in this. He pays good money for our service and he expects results."

Since he must guarantee beyond question all of his contracts, Dick Evans has no universal pricing system. Every job is examined on the spot; careful testing of soil conditions, an analysis of weed species, and a study of general climatic conditions are carried out before the job can be priced.

Furthermore, he's found no universal chemical that works in

all cases. Various compounds, in many combinations, and in differing dosages, are used, depending on the circumstances. Applicators must continue to learn all they can about weeds and the way they grow, about chemicals and how they act, and about the way weather affects herbicides, Evans insists.

All Equipment Same Color

All of the company's equipment is of standardized colors. Truck cabs are white, beds black, and spray tanks and equipment red. A minimum of advertising copy is used, just the company insignia (including the name in lower case letters, the firm's identifying logotype) and information required by law.

Each truck is equipped with snake bite kits, first aid kits, and road flares.

The larger units have remote control ignition switches and starter buttons for the pump engines located in the cabs, so they can be started or stopped at the operator's option while moving from one job site to another. A pressure gauge is also located in the cab.

"In small, confined areas with the serviceman headquartered in the center of activity, we use the following: 300-gallon Bonderized Bean tank, 20-gpm pump, and the usual attachments such as pressure regulator, pressure relief valve to prevent pulsation, and two Bean reels powered with an attachment of our own design (patent applied for)," Evans says.

For large-area operations, and where water dosages are high, the firm uses a 1000-gallon Bean Bonderized tank with built-in baffle plates to prevent sway. "We use a series of 10 to 12 agitator blades on the shaft for heavy agitation," Evans reveals. "Our minimum requirement in pumping equipment for these large areas is a 25-gpm Bean pump with an air-cooled Wisconsin engine."

Supplementary Tools

In soil sterilization work, Evans feels he needs a droplet solution, not a fine mist or spray. This allows herbicides to be

evenly distributed over the soil surface. "We have found wands to be our best bet," Dick remarks. "We have designed and applied for a patent on a wand made of aluminum, with a 'Y'-tip, on which is mounted 2 special nozzles which spray in overlapping circular patterns. These are of stainless steel and are manufactured specifically for our type of work by Spraying Systems, Inc."

Summing up his equipment requirements, Evans says the operator needs a tank large enough for the type of operation planned, with pump and pump engine overpowered for efficiency; more than enough mechanical agitation in the tank to obtain and maintain proper mix of materials; positive shutoffs; and truck with reserve capacity to pull load under abnormal conditions.

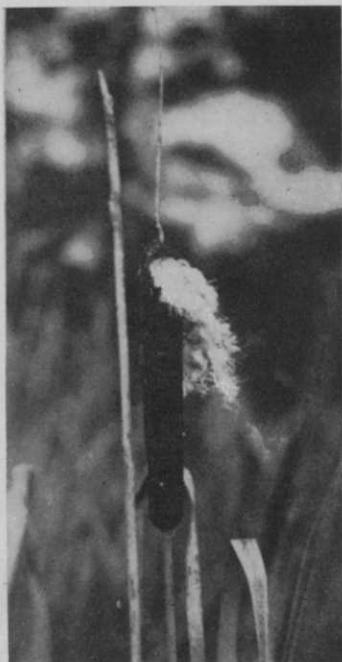
These are formidable requirements, but necessary to do a difficult job well.

Advice to Other Operators

Dick Evans believes there are great potential markets yet to be explored in custom application of herbicides. When asked to enumerate the steps newcomers should take to become active in this market, he lists the following.

1. Survey the market and determine the potential need for the type of service you intend to offer.
2. Secure adequate capital. No less than \$25,000 will do it.
3. Determine what assistance, if any, can be expected from suppliers in sales promotion.
4. Work out an arrangement with someone already in the business, in another area, to work with until he is satisfied you have acquired the necessary techniques of application.
5. Start negotiations with a bona fide insurance carrier. It takes time to get this insurance, and you just can't operate without it.

In short, industrial weed control on a contract basis is not a simple business; it takes a long time to get ready, it takes a lot of money to procure equipment



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and quarters, and it takes a lot of knowledge about weeds and chemicals.

But what it takes first of all is just plain hard work, and the flourishing firm of Dick Evans, Inc., is living evidence that when these factors are successfully combined, a lucrative and important business can be established.

**Method to Locate Weedicides
In Atmosphere Reported**

A method of detecting and measuring weedkilling chemicals in the atmosphere was reported recently at the American Chemical Society's 147th national meeting in Philadelphia.

The method could be used by government regulatory agencies to identify herbicides in the air and to determine the amounts prevalent during and after spraying, according to Donald F. Adams, head of the air pollution research laboratory at Washington State University.

An improved collecting technique and an automatic system for identifying and measuring the weedkillers have been combined in the new method, Adams said. Samples collected over 24-hour periods show daily fluctuations in the amount of weedkiller in the air.

The 2,4-D family of herbicides has been used extensively in wheat-growing areas and has contributed to increased wheat production, the chemist explained. This widespread use, however, has led to some unfortunate incidents in which nearby susceptible crops were damaged, he added.

The new method should help determine the range of weedkiller in the area of spraying, the distance it drifts with the wind, and whether it occurs in the air as vapor or as liquid droplets, Adams indicated. This information is essential to the safe application of 2,4-D.

The technique involves collecting samples by drawing air through a solvent, n-decane, contained in tiny tubes called "midget impingers," which are kept at just above freezing temperature. The material trapped in

the solvent is then analyzed for 2,4-D compounds by a sensitive technique known as gas chromatography, Adams explained.

Methods for measuring non-volatile 2,4-D substances and for separating gaseous from liquid samples are being developed by Adams and his co-workers, Craig M. Jackson and W. Lee Bamesberger.

Adams also expects the method to be used to detect insecticides in the atmosphere, although this has not yet been tried.

**Root-Absorbed Insecticide
Protects Plant as It Grows**

A breakthrough in the battle against sucking insects on ornamental plants has just been accomplished, according to Bill Hantsberger, Colorado State University Extension Entomologist.

Called Disyston, the new systemic insecticide is taken up by the plant roots and translocated through other parts of the plant while growth continues, it is said. As sucking insects such as aphids, leafhoppers, and mites feed on plant juices, they will be automatically poisoned.

Disyston will be marketed under the trade name of "Scope" systemic insecticide, by Chemagro Corp., Kansas City, Mo. It will be available in dry or granular form. The new product will give at least six weeks' protection against pests, it is reported.

USDA Approves Malathion Label

American Cyanamid Co. reports the Pesticide Regulation Division, U. S. Department of Agriculture, has accepted use of malathion for controlling wax scale on ornamentals. The label claim reads in part as follows:

"Malathion 57% Emulsifiable Liquid. Wax Scale—Ornamentals: For the control of wax scale on ornamentals, apply malathion 57% Emulsifiable Liquid at the rate of 2 quarts (40 ounces of actual malathion) per 100 gallons of water in the spring when crawlers are active.

"One or two repeat, full-coverage applications should be made at 10-day intervals."